



The Chain of Concern

January/February 2004

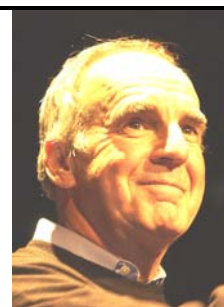
The Maine National Guard Family Program Newsletter



This publication and any events/special offers in it are for ALL Guard families. Being involved now makes a deployment later much easier. Being involved now, helps to support others who may be facing deployment.

**Family Assistance Center Phone Number
1-888-FMLY-CTR (1-888-365-9287)
www.me.ngb.army.mil/family**

What a party it was!! Thank you Joe Boulos



Joe Boulos

Mr. Boulos a former Marine and a Vietnam vet threw an awesome holiday party for families and soldiers. With only two weeks to plan the party became reality on December 18th. Over 1200 families, friends and soldiers were treated to an absolutely amazing evening - the old Service Merchandise building in So. Portland had been turned into a winter wonderland, pine trees, wreaths, stars floating in the evening sky were just some of the transformations. Families were treated to 3 bands an amazing meal, family videos, pictures and email. Santa came with Dennis, his elf, and gifts. The kids and some adults had their faces painted. They also played in the bouncy houses, bungee run, a visit from Slugger the Mascot from the Portland Seadogs and dancing in the isles. To top it off, Mr. Boulos provided buses for families coming down from the north and hotel rooms were donated.



The eleven soldiers going to Iraq to join the 133rd Engineer BN were recognized by all who spoke. From Senator Snow to Governor Baldacci. It was truly a wonderful sendoff for these eleven soldiers from Maine.



If you would like to send a thank you email note to Mr. Boulos, you can use the following addresses: msmith@boulos.com or you can sent a note to: Boulos Property Management, Attn: M Smith, 777 Congress St., Portland, ME 04101

Maine Oil Association Supports Maine Troops - Keep Warm This Winter

The Maine Oil Assoc. is teaming up with us again this year to provide oil to those serving out of state in support of the war on terrorism. Eligible family members are as follows: Spouses or significant others who live in the soldiers home or those who have temporary custody of a mobilized soldier's child(ren). There will be 100 certificates worth 100 gallons each provided to us in late January. The Family Program will administer this program in the following way: 1. Email your name, address, and phone number to the Family Assistance Center at mefacpublic@me.ngb.army.mil or call the FAC at 1-888-365-9287 no later than 20 January. On 30 January we will put them in order by income (rank) and mail out the certificates starting with the lowest income level families until the supply has been exhausted.

**TO THE 152 FIELD ARTILLERY AND 152 MAINTENANCE COMPANY.
BEST WISHES AND GOOD LUCK FOR A SUCCESSFUL MISSION**

Dear Families and Friends,

On behalf of the entire 133d Engineer Battalion I report to you with a heavy heart and deep sadness. On the 21st of December we lost two wonderful people and role model soldiers, Sgt Lynn Poulin and Spc Thomas Dostie who died in cowardice attack here at our main Forward Operating Base, Camp Marez located in Mosul Iraq. Our thoughts and prayers are focused with their families. We will miss these soldiers dearly, they will be forever etched in our hearts and we will never forget the ultimate sacrifice they made for this country.

I talked to both the Governor of the State of Maine and BG Libby the Adjutant General and they have both pledged their full support to the families of Lynn and Thomas and I know that all of the Maine National Guard personnel, the entire state of Maine and especially the soldiers and families of the 133d will be there for them in their time of need.

I am please to pass onto you that the 10 soldiers that were wounded during the same incident here are doing well. Your loved ones, members of the Battalion are amazing, they have accomplished so much here working together. It is true honor and a privilege to serve with them here in Iraq. They are strong and they are looking after each other the very best they can. Their response at the scene of the incident was extraordinary and I know because of their actions many more lives were saved.

I know that the road ahead will be difficult for the families of the fallen soldiers as well as every soldier and family member associated with the Battalion. Something was lost in all of here and there is need for a lot of healing. The Challenges are even greater with the holiday season, but we must all find a way to move on. Over here we will continue with our mission and I believe the best way to honor our fallen soldiers is to see this through and make sure that there lives were not lost in vain.

As a result of this deployment I know one thing... The freedom that we all enjoy in America is worth defending, it is special. Here we have seen the other side and that is not an option for the United States. Unfortunately to keep our treasured way of life there is a high price. I for one will be forever in the debt for those who have given all.

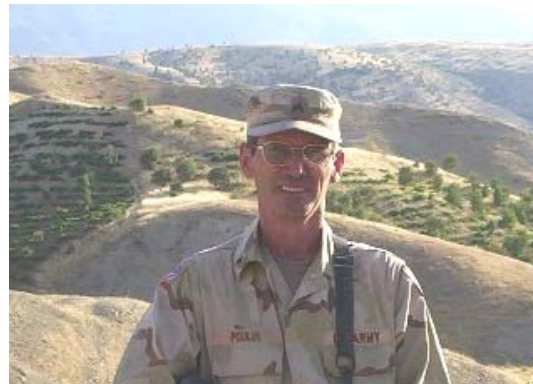
“TO THE LAST MAN”

LTC J.J. JANSEN

“Chamberlain 6”



SGT Thomas Dostie



SSG Lynn Poulin

This information is worth repeating....

It is important to call the FAC when you want to know information about an incident. Though the FAC representative may not be able to give you specifics, he/she might be able to say one of the following, depending upon what stage we are in:

Stage 1: “I haven’t heard about that, but I will find out and call you back.”

Stage 2: “Yes, we are aware that there was an incident, but I can’t give you details until the families have been notified. We expect that to happen within the next few hours, please feel free to call back after [time] o’clock”

Stage 3: “Yes, we are aware of the incident, there were # injured and # killed; we cannot give out the names, but the notifications have been made. If you have not been called, then it is not your soldier who was hurt or killed.”

Stage 4: “Yes, as the news papers reported, NAME, NAME, and NAME were injured and NAME was killed in the incident yesterday.

The next of kin of Soldiers that are injured will receive a call from either the Dept. of the Army or National Guard. Army Policy states if a soldier dies the next of kin is notified in person by the Casualty Officer.

SGT Harold Gray, 34, of Penobscot, a member of the Maine Army National Guard 133rd Engineer Battalion, was seriously injured the day after Christmas by a roadside bomb in Mosul, Iraq. SGT Gray sustained serious head and back injuries and has a long road to recovery ahead of him and his family at Walter Reed Medical Center, Washington DC. SGT Gray has a wife and three young children. There has been a fund set up for anyone wishing to make a contribution to the family:

Financial donations can be sent to:

For the Benefit of Harold Gray
C/O Seaboard Credit Union
PO Box G
Bucksport, ME 04416



Family Assistance Center Web Page

www.me.ngb.army.mil

This Web Page has proven to be very useful to all families of the guard. Unfortunately over the last month or so the National Guard Bureau has been doing upgrades on some of their equipment which has caused this page to not be available at times. Please keep checking it. It won't be long before they will have all the issues/bugs worked out and this page will be available to you on a regular basis.

The Above page is currently unavailable. Please use the following address until our regular page is available again.

www.me-arng.ngb.army.mil

Airport Passes to the Gate



Did you know you can get a pass to go through the security checkpoint to greet your soldier or escort your soldier right to the gate? Well you can. Here is the procedure.

Go to a ticketing agent or security Department and ask for a pass. You will need a picture ID. This is a regulation set forth by the TSA



Reunion Tips

Soon the soldiers of the 133rd and 152 Field Artillery Will be on their way home. It is a time of anticipation, Happiness and possibly fear of the unknown. Take time to review the following tips and don't hesitate to seek guidance from professionals, friends and your clergy to help you through the process of welcoming your soldier back into your life.

- Be patient with your soldier
- Listen to your soldier
- Be forgiving of your soldier
- Communicate with your soldier
- Be flexible
- Become a family/couple again

EVENTS

Lewiston Armory

January 7th at 6.30 C Co monthly Come Together meeting. Everyone is welcome. Come help plan upcoming events.

C Co January scrap book/craft evening is canceled.

January 23rd 1pm to 3pm Spa Afternoon Hairdressers, Sue and Meg will be back to do your hair. We will have someone to do massages and maybe someone to do a little yoga. There will be child care provided and light refreshments.

February 4th 6.30pm C Co monthly Come Together meeting. Everyone is welcome. Come help plan upcoming events.

February 12th 6.30pm Our monthly scrap booking/craft evening. Bring your knitting, needle work, or scrap booking for a fun evening out. We do this on the drill hall floor so the kids can help or play with the other kids.

Norway Armory

February 20th 1pm to 3pm Spa Afternoon We will have someone to do massages and maybe a little yoga. We are still looking for a hairdresser volunteer. If you or someone you know is interested let Priscilla at phebert@megalink.net or Tammy at mhaskell@nlis.net know.

Southern Part of the State

January 20th, 6:30pm at the Greater Grace Bible Church – B co FRG Meeting. This will be a potluck. Children will be decorating Cookies – Dessert First!!! Everyone is invited to join us. These meetings are fun and daycare is provided.

February 13th, Sanford – Bowling. Please RSVP so we can give you more information as we firm up details. This will prove to be a great time for everyone. Lynn Lewis lynnlewis@sacoriver.net or Donna Dee deezmom@maine.rr.com

February 17th, 6:30 pm at the Greater Grace Bible Church – B co FRG Meeting. Pot Luck Everyone is invited to join us. These meetings are fun and daycare is provided.

Win a Wonderful Week in Old Orchard Beach

A very generous citizen of Maine has graciously donated a week to be spent in a condo on the beach in Old Orchard Beach. If you have had a soldier in your immediate family that has served overseas in the war on terror, you are eligible for this drawing. This 2 bedroom condo with a screened in porch and sleeping for 6 is located 200 yards from the beach. It can be viewed at www.sandcastle Realty Maine.com. It is the first condo to be shown on the rental page.

The week the condo is being made available is the 3rd week of June, 2005. If you are interested in putting your name in for the drawing, please either call the Family Assistance Center at 1-888-365-9287 or the preferred method - email them to mefacpublic@me.ngb.army.mil. The drawing will be held on Valentine's Day.



TEEN ACTIVITY IN BANGOR ON MARCH 12th



Hey Teens, want to go shopping (bring your own money), snow tubing, roller-skating, and do a little Moonlight Bowling. The Family program is sponsoring a full day of activities and into the evening with an overnight at the 112th Armory for all teens interested. To join in the fun you will need to fill out and send in the permission form with \$20 by March 1st. The form can be found on the web at www.me.ngb.army.mil/family under the Readiness link or by contacting Shelly Hafford at haffordss@msn.com or by phone 843-5377. You must be 13–18 years of age to participate. Times and outline of the day will be provide at a later date.



Transportation will be provided from August to Bangor, if you need a ride, please RSVP to Shelly by Feb 18th so arrangements for vehicles can be

made.

PROFESSIONAL PORTRAITS

Once again Najean Shedyack has offered to do portraits for our families. What a great opportunity to get a family portrait or a portrait done for your soldier overseas. This will be a by appointment only event. Call early as slots fill up quickly. The cost is to cover the materials to produce the portraits.

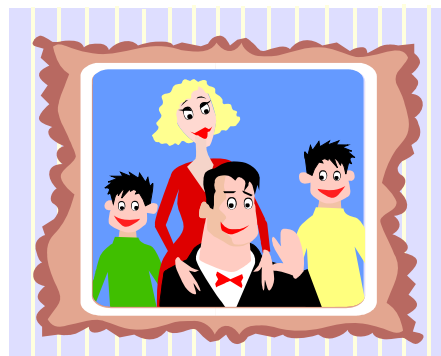
Where: Augusta Armory

When: February 26th with a snow date of Feb 27th

Time: as scheduled every ½ hour

Cost: \$38.50

Includes 1 8X10, 2 5X7, 4 4X5's



Reservations: Email Robin Walsh @ 592-5544 or robin.walsh@me.ngb.army.mil



What a special moment for father and son...

SGT Matthew Dow and his son Joshua

Phone Cards and Coffee Donated by Westbrook Legion Post 62

Through the efforts of the entire Legion, \$3,000 dollars worth of phone cards and 300 lbs of Dunkin Donuts coffee along with Creamer/Sugar and Werther's candies were collected for Co B 133rd Engineer as their hometown unit along with the rest of the Battalion. Pictured here are Brigadier General Bill Libby, LTC Gerald Dunlap, Past Commander of the Legion Post 62 of Westbrook, Maj Dottie McGuirk (Ret), Kevin McGuirk, Robin Walsh, and SFC Barbara Claudel.



A Word about Food, no I'm not referring to New Year's Resolutions...

Did you ever think about all the every day, common expressions that relate to food, there's:
She's so sweet, What a sour puss, He's such a ham, It's a piece of cake.

The one we are going to talk about is "I heard it through the Grape Vine". Well what you hear may be true and good news. Other times it may be half true, and still other times it's not true at all. Even though the information may have passed along with all good intentions and the belief that the information was true, - it can still be hurtful and may be inappropriate to continue to pass on.

If you receive information that please consider the following before passing it along:

- Do you know the source of the information and is that source reliable?
- Is this information valuable for others to have?
- Am I the right person to pass on the information?

If the answer to the above questions are NO. There are three things you should do:

1. Tell the person passing on the information, that you do not feel it is their place to pass on the information.
2. Explain why you feel this way and some of the harm that could come from continuing to do so. Be tactful, factual and firm.
3. Report the information to the appropriate people, so the rumor can be addressed and the correct information can be put out.

I'd like to give two examples of situations that actually occurred.

A lady in my office (Mary) confided in her co-worker that she was having minor surgery, she asked that the coworker keep the information confidential. When the coworker ran into Mary's mother, she mentioned her concern about the upcoming surgery. Mary had not told her mother because she knew it would worry her and she already had a number of health issues of her own. Instead of Mary's mom being spared the concern, now she worried that the surgery must be very serious since Mary had not told her.

The other incident happened when the FAC received a call from another state asking for the address of a soldier who had been injured, we'll call him John Smith. The FAC had not been notified of any injury to a John Smith, but the caller insisted that the information was correct and they wanted to send a card to the family. Well we do have a John Smith, but he was not injured- the soldier they were trying to reach out to was not a Maine soldier, but a soldier from another state.

In both cases there was no intent to harm anyone, it was just the opposite, they were concerned and wanted to reach out to support others. The proof is in the pudding, if you hear something- think about Mary and John before you pass it on.

Youth Camp Application Available NOW

Camp Dates: 17 - 23 July & 24 - 30 July 2005

Location: Bog Brook Training Site, Gilead, Maine



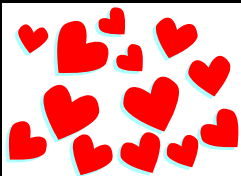
If you have a child 9 - 12 years old, you will not want to miss out on this great opportunity! The Maine National Guard Youth Camp is in it's 6th year and we are planning for another year of fun and adventure. Join us at Bog Brook for a week you will never forget. Meet new friends, rappel, march, swim, kayak and so much more. Military kids are a special group, and we put on a first class camp to show them why they are special and that their parents are special too!

We are looking for volunteers who are either military or family members over the age of 20 and also teenagers who wish to be Junior Counselors. (Military volunteers who are selected will be in a paid status and family members will be on an order to cover mileage) You can get your application by going to the Family Program Website www.me-armg.ngb.army.mil or call 1-800-581-9989. Deadline for volunteers and Junior Counselors applications are 1 April and Camper applications 1 May. Selection for volunteers and Junior counselors will be made no later than 1 May.

Reunion Briefings for Families of Soldiers Returning from the 133rd and 152 F/A

The following meetings have been set up across the state for ANYONE to attend. We Strongly encourage you to try to attend one of these sessions. Each session will have breakouts for adults, teens, youth and there will be daycare for toddlers. You will hear from Chaplain Gibson, Tri-care, and Veterans Services. This will be a good time to start asking questions regarding your soldiers return.

Tuesday, February 1 st	Caribou Armory	6 p.m.
Wednesday, February 2 nd	Houlton Armory	6 p.m.
Thursday, February 3 rd	Calais Armory	6 p.m.
Saturday, February 5 th	Norway Armory	10 a.m.
Saturday, February 5 th	Lewiston Armory	2 p.m.
Sunday, February 6 th	Portland Armory	10 a.m.
Sunday, February 6 th	Westbrook Armory	2 p.m.
Monday, February 7 th	Belfast Armory	6 p.m.
Tuesday, February 8 th	Waterville Armory	6 p.m.
Thursday, February 10 th	Skowhegan (Location to be announced)	6 p.m.
Tuesday, February 15 th	Augusta/Gardiner (location to be announced)	6 p.m.
Wednesday, February 16 th	Sanford Armory	6 p.m.



Join us for a Valentines Day get together

Portland Armory - Saturday, Feb 12th
Augusta Armory - Sunday, Feb 13th
Time: 1 - 3 p.m.

Games & snacks. Send a love message via video clip to your soldier Entertainment for everyone! Special gifts for adults - please RSVP to mefacpublic@me.ngb.army.mil indicate which location and how many adults and children will be attending



Heart to Heart – Families supporting families

Moms, Dads, Wives, Husbands... it does not matter who you are or what military service your loved on is in (so pass this one to your neighbors and friends). You are welcome at any of the below Support Groups. Pick the one that is closest to you, or the one you are most comfortable with. They are NOT unit specific! They are families supporting and getting to know other families. Each one has a

facilitator that will just keep the session flowing and help coordinate space, materials covered and of course, FOOD!!!
Portland – Augusta – Brunswick

Augusta - January 6th and February 3rd – All are welcome to join us for a time of chatting, laughing, and support. The meeting starts at 6 pm with a pot luck meal. Nazarene Church, 30 Nazarene Dr., Augusta Maine... Any questions please call 626-4410. We'd like to extend a special invite to the families of the 152 Maintenance Co. Being connected will help you through your deployment.

From the State Volunteer Coordinator Linda Newbegin

Happy holidays to all...

First I'd like to thank all of you for opening your hearts and becoming part of our Maine National Guard Family. I've had the privilege of meeting many of you through the course of the deployments and am so impressed with the caring and support you give to each other. It has not been an easy year, but you have shown great courage and dignity. You have reached out to other military families and have built a bond that will stay with you forever. We have also been blessed with an unbelievable outpouring of support from our friends, families, communities, congregations and schools. I am so proud to say that I am part of a military family and that I live in the state of Maine where people take care of each other.

I'd also like to recognize the wonderful support our families have received from our military chain of command. From our wonderful TAG, Gen. Bill Libby to the deployed units, the rear detachments, the new recruits and the Family Assistance Center everyone has shown a sincere concern for the welfare of the families. Not only are people concerned, but also they do whatever needs to be done to take care of the families.

And, what would we do without our Unit Volunteer Coordinators. During the most difficult time in your life, you unselfishly stepped forward to become a leader. You give countless hours of your time talking to family members, organizing events and conducting meetings. You have been invaluable! Also, thanks to the unit volunteers who make sure that our phone tree operates effectively. It may seem like a small thing, but those calls are so appreciated, thank you.



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Messages from Unit Volunteer Coordinators

1/152 Field Artillery - Lisa Nichols, Battalion Rep.

HAPPY NEW YEAR from your Family Readiness Team. Our goal for 2005 is to provide the best support and communication possible for military families in our units and surrounding communities. Kristin Devoe has been named the new UVC for HHS, located in Caribou. She has a long association with the Maine National Guard Family Program. Her most recent position was UVC for the 112th Medical Company. Kristin's telephone number is 325-4325 and her email address is: devoe@ainop.com. Please feel free to call or send a message to her if you have a concern or would like to volunteer for the unit FRG. WELCOME, Kristin, to our Family Readiness Team.

Gerald Soucy, full-time FAC contact, is also available to help military families in need. His office is located in the Caribou Armory, at 120 Sincovek St. Office hours are 8:00 – 4:00, Monday through Friday, and he can be reached at 498-3459 or 592-1356 (cell). His e-mail address is: Gerald.soucy@me.ngb.army.mil. He suggests you call to make sure he is in his office before stopping by. Please don't hesitate to call him if the need arises.

A special "THANK YOU" to Vivian Hynick for taking notes at our quarterly meetings and typing them. She does a wonderful job and I really appreciate her willingness to assume the role of Secretary.

The next quarterly meeting will be held on Saturday, January 22, 2005, at the Houlton Armory. Snow date is Jan. 29th. The meeting begins at 9:00 a.m. and guest speakers are CW2 Clifford Caldwell, commander of HHS, and Mr. Charlie Smith who works for the Veterans Administration in Caribou. They will be discussing family reunion issues and services available through the Veterans Admin. for soldiers and family members. Quarterly financial reports are due, so please bring a copy of October, November, and December bank statements and your financial binders.

152 FA - Kristin Hickey

On Saturday December 11 we held a Holiday party for the soldiers and families of A-Btry, Waterville. The party was held at Scotty's restaurant in Newport. There was a wonderful buffet of appetizers and lasagna. We had a beautiful Christmas tree filled with lots of presents for the children and a special appearance from Santa Claus himself. Each child received a gift and had a photo with Santa to send their brave soldiers in the desert. We also had someone video taping and that too will be sent overseas. The children also enjoyed the demolition of a holiday piñata loaded with candy and small prizes. There were three buckets of assorted holiday candy, each child was given one chance to guess how many pieces were in each bucket.

Each family that attended the party was given a beautiful patriotic holiday wreath that was provided at a significant discount to us. Also each family was given a raffle ticket and entered into a drawing. The raffle prizes were donated and we gave away over \$1000 in donated items. Each family that was present at the end of the party during the drawing received at least one raffle prize and some received two. We also created a lovely center piece for each table using some of the candles that were donated by Village Candle earlier in the year these too, were sent home with the families. Due to inclement weather some families were unable to attend. The attendance was lower than expected, with about fifty people. On behalf of A-Btry I would like to take this opportunity to first, thank each and every volunteer for all they have done throughout this deployment. I would also like to give a special thanks to Nicole Greene and Kim Soucy for their outstanding efforts and dedication to this unit and the Holiday Party they truly did a great job! We would also like to thank all of the businesses that donated to our party.

We hope that all of you had the best holiday season possible and look forward to the spring. Please keep your eyes and ears open for information regarding reunion briefings. If you are not currently on my e-mail update list and would like to be, please e-mail me at Kristin.hickey@maine.edu.

Best wishes always,
Kristin Hickey
152 FA, A-btry, Waterville

152nd FA - Len Hanson

Here is hoping that each and everyone had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Here in Calais we remain busy. As November closed we were in preparation for our 3rd float. Fourteen of us headed out to North Wind Farms in Wesley to cut Christmas Trees and we learned some interesting things - Sheri Sivret's new Dodge Caravan can go on tote roads...I was careful not to show the road when I took the picture I sent David (and that was the trailer hitch not the oil pan, that hit - twice). Two of the trees we cut were for our float on the 3rd and what a float it was... 15-20 degrees...some change from our first float in July. But, we had a great time - the Dunkin Donuts hot chocolate that they donated really hit the spot on that ride. And without question - we were the only 53 ft float in the parade that was playing patriotic music...Christmas trees decorated with yellow bows and red/white and blue lights, Toby Keith's American Soldier...the 1-5-2 deployed soldiers pictures hung every 4 feet around the float... what a time. Warming up after the float found us sitting at a local eatery and pondering our next event...the Christmas party. As the days closed in on the party - we were still trying to finish all last minute planning and organizing. When the program began at the Calais Motor Inn on 18 December we had approximately 140 people seated - what a time. Stockings for the children of the soldiers, a great meal, our new Commander, Lt Stephen Spearin was on hand to give the Commander's address... Sergeant Major Nichols assisted by 6 family members put on the American Flag folding ceremony - and what a ceremony it was. Followed up by the reading of a message from our soldiers deployed to the families and a 12 minute video with their Christmas' messages. We were truly blessed by the attendance of the families and the soldiers still stationed back here...it show us all as bonded together - united in one as the Maine Army National Guard Families. We sit now with only our regular meetings (every other Monday), our swim events and our Victory in Washington County Party left on the agenda.... Maybe an ice fishing trip for the families, who knows. What a blessed year it has been for me...one person should not have this much fun. Anyone with ideas for us - interesting events upcoming in the Washington County area - Black bear hockey games - lets kick some ideas around for the next month or two activities before our party. Thanks for the memories. Len bigbear2@midmaine.com

152/FA - Ruth Barnes

We had nearly 125 people attend our Annual Family Christmas Party. A group of soldiers arranged, prepared and served our delicious meal. We are very thankful for that. We are also thankful for the many families who attended. A good time was enjoyed by all. Mr. and Mrs. Santa visited the children and handed out magic reindeer food and gifts for each child. Norma Stitham filmed much of the Christmas party including a few interviews for our soldiers in Iraq. The VCR tape was mailed to soldiers to watch and bring back when they return. Door prizes were donated and nearly everyone left with a gift.

A special thanks to Coca Cola, Pepsi, Freshway (Naturally Potatoes), McCains and our volunteers for making this a memorable event." "HAPPY NEW YEAR! This has been a very challenging year for all of us and together we have made it through. Freedom has now taken on a greater meaning. The meaning of our slogan, "Families are the heart of the National Guard" has really come to light. We are all looking forward to our troops return

HSC 133d Engineer Battalion - Judy Dix

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and safe Happy New Year. What a great turn out we had for the Unit Christmas Party. We had crafts for the kids and lots of other activities. The kids had drinks and cookies and were very excited when Santa came with his bag full of toys. Along with the Christmas Party we were able to attend the Craft Fair that was going on down stairs. Hopefully you were able to get a little bit of shopping done.

The Yankee Swap that was scheduled for December was rescheduled due to bad weather. The new date will be January 11th at 6:00 pm. In case of bad weather, call Judy at 727-6151 for the new date. Location: Bruno's, 33 Allen Ave. (Morrill's Corner), Portland

January 22nd from 1 - 3pm. we will be having an ice cream social for the kids. This will be at the Armory at Stevens Avenue, Portland ME. Please RSVP to me 727-6151. I need to know how much ice cream to buy. Keep February 12th open for Bowling at the Yankee Lanes on Riverside Street, Portland, ME.. Bowling will be from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. RSVP to me 727-6151.

The Reunion Briefings will be starting in February. Please check the date and times to see which one is more convenient for you to attend.

Judy Dix
HSC 133rd Engineers
Unit Coordinator



Co A 133d Engineer Battalion Michelle Steward & Tracy Smith

I sure hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas. This has been a long tough year, but we only have a few more months and it will be over.

As some of you may know already I will be stepping down as Coordinator for CO A. I have enjoyed the time that I have spent over the past year with the family support program but I have had some personal problems that have made it impossible for me to continue. I need to spend more time at home with my family as I prepare for my husband's return home. This was a difficult decision but it is the best for my family, my husband and me.

I want to thank Barbara Claudel for all her help to get me set up and get the whole thing running. Most of all I want to thank Mike "GI JOE" Gallant, for without his help I couldn't have accomplished half of what we did. Also I want to thank Tracy Smith, Najean Shedjack, Judy Shut, Robin Shea, my sister-in-laws Denise and Darcy, my friends Lori Costa and Debbie Linkletter and all the others for all the help and support that they have given me thru this.

As I step down, Tracy Smith and Kiki Bean will be stepping up to take over in my place. They have some wonderful ideas and will do a wonderful job. Please welcome them as you have welcomed me. I will still be updating the Webpage and you will still see me from time to time, just not at the same capacity that you have in the past. I look forward to seeing you all on homecoming day, which will be a joyous day for us all.

Take Care and God bless,
Michelle Steward

I hope that everyone has had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I write my first newsletter message to you as the new A company coordinator. For those of you I haven't talked to yet, my name is Tracy Smith. My husband is Spc Jody Smith with the 1st platoon. I take over from our previous coordinator Michelle Steward, who at this time I would like to thank for all the wonderful things that she has done for us in the last year. Without you Michelle, I know that a lot of us wouldn't have known what to do. You have done a great job in getting the website up and going and getting us the information quickly so we could enjoy the many events that have happened in the past.

Well we are almost there, before we know it our soldiers will be boarding those planes to fly back to the United States and boarding buses to return to our outstretched arms. So we have a lot of things to do to get ready for that day whenever it may be. I know that a lot of rumors have been flying about exactly when they will be coming home. We don't exactly have a time frame yet, but hopefully in the next couple months we will be able to start nailing down a time. As soon as we find out we will be getting that out to you.

We would like to start the planning phases for homecoming. These plans actually pertain to two different events. First is the actual day that they head back to Belfast and step off the bus to welcoming families and friends, the second is what we call the Salute to Arms. The homecoming we would like some help planning exactly how we would like to welcome the soldiers back to the armory. We will also need some help when it gets closer to the day for decorating and setting up. We will be having meetings in January and February. The times have not been determined yet but I would like to have two meetings one in the Skowhegan area and one in the Belfast area. We would like to invite you to come and help us in the plans of welcoming them home. The Salute to Arms will also be talked about at these meetings and for

more information on that please come to one of our meetings.

There are many events in the process of being put together to keep the kids and us adults occupied as we wait for that day. Some ideas that are being tossed around are a movie, skating, roller skating, sliding, bowling, sleepovers, and more. Please feel free to email me with ideas and thoughts about where you would like to see an event occur. For more information about dates and times for these events please go to the website at www.133rdengineers.com. They are still in the planning phase so keep looking to see when they will occur. All military families are invited to attend these events. I have a new email address so if you need to contact me feel free to send me an email with your thoughts, ideas, or complaints to aco133rd@yahoo.com. If there is anything at all that you need feel free to contact me anytime at 947-0783 (home) or you can reach me by cell phone at 735-3003. I would also like to congratulate Leslie and Alton Carter on their upcoming bundle of joy. Once again I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and I hope to see you all at our meetings and events that we will be having.

Tracy Smith

Co B 133d Engineer Battalion - Lynn Lewis and Donna Dee

I hope you enjoyed the Holiday season and now that they are over we can focus on 2005!!!! I think all who went to the Christmas party put on at the Service Merchandise building would agree that it was a wonderful event. It is events like that, when we feel the overwhelming support for our soldiers and their families. What a gift to us all.

Coming up in January we will continue with our FRG meetings at the Greater Grace Bible Church in Gorham. January's meeting is on Thursday the 20th. Pot luck as usual, we seem to have great luck with the amount and selection of food that is brought in. To make sure the kids don't come down from their Christmas sugar high... we will be having cookie decorating set up on one of the tables that night, if you are planning to come it would be great if you let us know so we make sure we have enough goodies. That night, desert can come first. We have been blessed to have some new faces attend our meetings and would love to see "regulars". Please feel free to invite even more along with all of our a friend to join the fun.



Donna and Lynn

February is a short and busy month for us all... A bowling league for us. So break out the bowling shirts, and kick off the winter boots in exchange for those great looking bowling shoes! The date is set for February 13th and will have a Valentine's day theme. (Watch out for more cookies!) Donna will send out as soon as we find out more. Once again we have a reunion briefing on the 6th at 2:00. This meeting will provide us with some great information on how to deal with our soldiers return; encourage all to come to this meeting; it should prove to be very informative. Not to mention the fact that it means we are that much closer to seeing the buses roll into Westbrook. We are also all invited to help spruce up the Westbrook Armory on the 5th of February in anticipation of their return sometime in the spring. Most of us have been in the Armory and I'm sure we all can agree that it definitely needs some (a lot) of help. The more hands we have to paint, wash, scrub, sweep etc the better. Let's get that old Armory looking great for when we welcome them all home!! Last but not least we still have our regular FRG pot luck meeting on the 17th of February.

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I also want to take this opportunity to thank Robin Walsh for a job well done. It will take two of us as co-coordinators, Donna Dee and me to fill her shoes. However Robin isn't going far and is still a very important part of the B Co. family. Congratulations on the new job Robin.

Warm Regards,
Lynn Lewis

Co C, 133d Engr Bn - Tammy Haskell

Christmas is over and it's a new year, they will be home soon. I want to Thank all of you who helped organize the Company Christmas party. Santa gave out over 20 presents and the food was plentiful and delicious. The adults won the many donated door prizes. The silent auction rose over \$300.00. I have someone's cake pan who brought cookies for the kids to decorate. Let me know if it is yours. Priscilla Hebert has taken over Homecoming planning. She will also be leading the January and February Come Together meetings as I will be away on business.

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT THE FAMILY PROGRAM STAFF LOOKED LIKE?

FAMILY PROGRAM OFFICE



MAJOR ANDY GIBSON



SFC BARBARA CLAUDEL



ROBIN WALSH



JENNIFER BENSON

FAMILY ASSISTANCE CENTER



KERRY BIRMINGHAM (RET)

SGM



SGT CORY GOODELL



SGT ESTHER BOWMAN



SFC GERALD SOUCY (RET)

DVEM

Attn: Family Program Office

State House Station #33

Augusta, ME 04333-0033



Comments or suggestions for upcoming newsletter features may be directed to:

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1-800-581-9989, or 626-4410.

DVEM, Attn: DPA-FP

State House Station #33

Augusta, Maine 04333-0033